

REMARKS

This is intended as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated September 14, 2010. Please reconsider the claims pending in the application for reasons discussed herein.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 2, 19, and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Widney*. (US Patent 6,481,082). Claims 3-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Widney* in view of *Current* (US Patent 3,489,620). Claims 9-14, 18, and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Widney* in view of *Nast*. Claims 15-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Widney/Nast* as applied to claims 1 and 14 above, and further in view of *Payne* (US Patent 4,045,591). Claims 22 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Widney/Nast* as applied to claims 1 and 14 above, and further in view of *Yoshida* (US Patent 4,588,869). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections.

Independent claims 1 and 14 recite, among other things, treating each of said heat-affected zones to alleviate irregularities induced during fusing. *Widney* (and *Nast*) fails to teach or suggest this step. *Widney* discloses a method of manufacturing continuous sucker rod. The method of *Widney* includes welding ends of round bars at a well site. The method of *Widney* further includes grinding and polishing a weld area between the round bars which is commonly done during the welding operation to meet dimensional specifications of the rod. It is noted that grinding and polishing as disclosed in *Widney* is not the same as treating heat-affected zones to alleviate irregularities induced during fusing. There is no mention in *Widney* that the weld area between the round bars is treated to alleviate irregularities induced during welding as claimed. In fact, *Widney* states that the weld area between the round bar cannot be treated because the connection must be made in the field and these welds are left with heat affected zones (see *Widney*, col. 2, lines 39-45). *Nast* discloses a process relating to welding wire and fails to cure the deficiencies of *Widney*. Therefore, independent

claims 1 and 14 are allowable over *Widney* (and *Nast*). The remaining claims depend from one of these independent claims and are allowable based on their dependency on an allowable claim.

Claims 1, 2, 19, and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's Admitted Prior Art (AAPA) in view of *Sato* (US Patent 5,895,009), *Widney* and *Tessmann* (US Patent 3,259,969). Claims 3-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over AAPA/*Sato/Widney/Tessmann* as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of *Current*. Claims 9-14, 18, and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over AAPA in view of *Sato*, *Widney*, *Tessmann*, and *Nast*, et al. Claims 22 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over AAPA/*Sato/Widney/Tessmann/Nast* as applied to claims 1 and 14 above, and further in view of *Yoshida*. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections.

Independent claims 1 and 14 recite, among other things, treating each of said heat-affected zones to alleviate irregularities induced during fusing. As admitted by the Examiner in the Office Action, AAPA fails to disclose this step. Thus, the Examiner relies on *Widney* and *Tessmann* to disclose this step. As set forth above, *Widney* clearly does not disclose that the weld area between the round bars are treated to alleviate irregularities induced during welding as claimed and therefore fails to cure the deficiencies of the AAPA.

Tessmann discloses a method of connecting wires 15, 16 by a welding process and then shearing a portion of the wires 15, 16. During the welding process of the wires 15, 16, an upset region 29 (see *Tessmann*, Figure 3A) is formed. In a conventional butt welding operation, the upset region 29 is removed by filing the upset region by hand (see *Tessmann*, col. 3, lines 44-46) but an aspect of the invention disclosed in *Tessmann* is that the upset region 29 is removed by shearing (see *Tessmann*, Figures 4-8). Shearing a portion between welded wires as disclosed in *Tessmann* is clearly different from treating heat-affected zones to alleviate irregularities induced during fusing as claimed. Thus, *Tessmann* fails to cure the deficiencies of the

AAPA. Sato, Current Nast or Yoshida also fails to cure the deficiencies of the AAPA for reasons set forth herein and previous responses.

Therefore, independent claims 1 and 14 are allowable over the cited references. The remaining claims depend from one of these independent claims and are allowable based on their dependency on an allowable claim.

Conclusion

Having addressed all issues set out in the office action, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully requests that the claims be allowed.

Respectfully submitted,



William B. Patterson
Registration No. 34,102
PATTERSON & SHERIDAN, L.L.P.
3040 Post Oak Blvd. Suite 1500
Houston, TX 77056
Telephone: (713) 623-4844
Facsimile: (713) 623-4846
Attorney for Applicant(s)